FROM SPARK TO SPACE

HAMATEUR CHATTER

One of the World's Oldest Continuously Active Radio Amateur Clubs -- since 1917

May, 2000 Vol. 08 No. 05

club officers

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Barbara Brewer		KB9TIV
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From the President's Desk

Dave DeFebo - WB9BWP

Dave DeFebo

For the May meeting we had our first auction in over 10 years. It seems to have gone pretty well. We even had 41 in attendance, which is not bad considering there were a couple of scheduling conflicts that evening. Final numbers are not in as I write this, but we did take in some money from a 10% cut of items over $5.00 and outright sales donated to the club. We would like to thank those who donated items to the club. I think it is safe to say everyone who bought anything got a bargain. We also had a few visitors to the club and even signed up 2 of them. Welcome to our new members. In June we will return to the raffles at the end of the meeting for the small stuff you want to clear out of you house.

I would like to thank Norm Russell and his family for helping out with the mailing for the May Chatter. We always are looking for people who can get the Chatter to the printer, pick it up, fold, label, stamp, and drop in the mail. If you are interested, talk to Pancho, Brian White, John Merkl, or Barbara Brewer.

Elections have come and gone. We did get one new officer, Les Hunt - KB9QZQ as Treasurer (thanks Les). For director we re-elected Tom Fuszard and Kate Kedney (who both appointed to fill out terms of deceased members).

continued on page 2

Milwaukee Area Nets

DAY	TIME	MHZ	ACTIVITY
Daily	6-8 AM	14.290	Wisconsin/Florida Net (SSB)
Daily	6:30 PM	3.645	Wis. Slow Speed CW Traffic Net
MON-FRI	8:30 AM	3.965	After Breakfast Club (SSB)
MON	8:00 PM	146.445	Emergency Net
MON	9:00 PM	146.670 -	ARES Net (Milwaukee-Waukesha)
MON	9:00 PM	50.160	6 Mtr. General Net
TUE	9:00 AM	50.160	6 Mtr. 2nd shifter's Net
TUE	8:00 PM	144.250	Badger Contesters (SSB)
TUE	8:00 PM	7.035	A.F.A.R. Net (CW)
WED	8:00 PM	28.365	10-10 International (Milwaukee Ch.) (SSB)
THU	9:00 PM	50.160	6 Mtr. General Interest Net
THU	9:00 PM	146.910 -	Computer Net
FRI	8:45 PM	28.490	MRAC W9RH 10 meter Station Net (SSB)
FRI	9:15 PM	147.045 +	W9RH 2 mtr. FM net after the 10 mtr. net
SAT	9:00 PM	146.910 -	Saturday Nite Fun net
SUN	8:30 AM	3.985	QCWA (Chptr. 55) (SSB)
SUN	10:00 AM	443.800 +	FM-38 Link to 146.88 Baraboo SWAP Net
SUN	8:00 PM	28.365	10-10 International (Milwaukee Ch.) (SSB)
SUN	8:00 PM	146.910 -	Information Net
SUN	9:00 PM	146.910 -	Swap Net

The 2 meter FM frequencies are -600 khz offset FM repeaters. FM38 is +5 Mhz offset, tone 114.8. The 10 meter SSB frequencies are upper sideband (USB). If there are additions, changes, or corrections to this list, please contact: Pancho - KA9OFA at **344-4694** or call::

1-(262)-797-MRAC or (797-6722).

HAMATEURCHATTER is the newsletter of MRAC (Milwaukee Radio Amateurs' Club) which is a not for profit organization for the advancement of amateur radio and the maintenance of fraternalism and and a high standard of conduct. MRAC Membership dues are $15.00 per year and run on a calendar year starting with January1.

Our Club/VEC Phone no. is (262) 797-MRAC.

Correspondence may be addressed to:

M. R. A. C.

Milwaukee Radio Amateurs' Club
P.O. Box 25707
Milwaukee, WI 53225

Our meetings are normally at 7:30 PM.
the last Thursday of the month except for December.

Presidents Desk continued from page 1

The other "new" director is Ken Eggert who just couldn't stay away after giving up his treasurer job. Dick McNew did not run for re-election due to health and time reasons. Thanks for 2 years as a Director, Dick. Notice a trend here? Next year we elect 3 directors, officers come up again in 2002. Please consider running for an office. It takes a number of people a good deal of work to run an active club. You do want to be part of an active club?

Did someone provide some help to you when you got started in radio? How about when you tried that new mode for the first time? Or did you stumble through something because you could not find anyone who could help? Would you like to provide some assistance to someone needing it? We would like to start a registry, a list of people with an area of specialty, a phone number and general area where they live and make the list available to people who need some help. It could be someone studying for a first license or an upgrade, someone looking to buy their first new radio (or learn to use that radio), whatever. Can we put your name on the list? Let me know (and thanks to Roger Zaun for the idea).

I wish to comment on some possible mis-understandings about the new license tests. Due to time constraints, the question pool committee (a group of 3 hams who are part of the National Council of VEC - NCVEC) did not create a batch of new questions on new topics, they just re-arranged the questions based on fewer tests (total revamping of the tests begins in 2001). If you have any study materials published prior to about mid-March of this year, the questions may be a little different. If you studied an older book and took a later test you may have been confused and possibly not passed. We are sorry, but I promise, we do follow the rules when it comes to testing. If we do not follow the rules, we will not be a VEC. And once again, let me explain, we are a VEC, not a VE. A VEC is a Volunteer Examiner Coordinator. There are only 14 VEC's in the entire US. We are the ONLY VEC located in Wisconsin. So what? A VEC is responsible for everything related to testing, from generating the tests to submitting information to the FCC. A VE gets materials from a VEC, administers a test, and returns materials to the VEC who then submits the data to the FCC. While some VEC were talking about waits of up to 2 months for upgrades after the April 15 rush, licenses processed through MRAC took only 1-2 weeks. Good job people. The MRAC VEC is managed by John Kraak - KF9XL (testing) and Tom Fuszard KF9PU (electronic filing). If you have a problem, talk to us about it. By the way, ever notice those who complain the loudest about something usually do not have all the facts? Thanks.

We are looking for people who have recently built (there are a lot of very interesting kits currently on the market) or bought a new piece of equipment. This could be anything from some small gadget to a big time radio. How about standing up and talking to the group about it? Maybe even a demo? It's not that hard. It need not be an entire program, just part of one. Four people talking for 10 or 15 minutes is about an hour. Look I've done it a few times, you can too (after all, you do talk on the radio don't you?).

Sorry for the kind of harsh tone this month, that's the way it is sometimes. I'll try to be nicer next month.

Wanted

Looking for 19" rack shelves and other rack stuff (cabinets not needed right now). Thanks...
Dave - WB9BWP
529-5583 or Email
"Dave DeFebo"
wb9bwp@execpc.com

MRAC Board Meeting 5/22/Y2K

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 at WB9LNU's QTH.

Treasurers report - $9472.12 including the CD and VEC funds.

Dave, WB9BWP requested that from this day forward, we keep the VEC funds totally separate from the MRAC funds are far as reporting the available cash that the club has to work with.

Ken, W9MOT, our parting treasurer, says that the post office box number will change to 250477. Since the number will change, we can move the box to a new location closer to one of the new officers.

The next board meeting will be at Johnny V's on 84th street. The July meeting will be at Dave's QTH. Matt will take the Aug. or Sept. meeting.

The electronic filing of the Chatter is still having the bugs taken out and some experimenting is still in order.

Auction night at the club meeting is Thursday. Buyers will pay the treasurer 10% of the sale, if the transaction is over $5.00.

This weekend will be the last VE test session until September.

Brian, K9LCQ, is trying to get a class room at WCTC so MRAC can teach classes. More on this later.

Dick, WB9PTC will no longer be doing CW practice over the air on 2 meters. John, WB9PSE, our appointed board member for Al's position, recommended that the club make a certificate for Dick to thank him for all his hard work to teach CW classes. Dave will ask at the club meeting if anyone else is interested in teaching CW over the air on behalf of the club.

John , WB9PSE needs help with sending out the Chatters every month. He needs someone to help pick up the Chatters from the printer etc.

Field Day will come before the club meeting this year. Brian, K9LCQ will be the Chairman. Food will be served at 12:00. We need help to set up at 8:30 Saturday morning.

Brian reports that the new club roster will be ready in June. Matt will make new badges every year and extra's if needed for someone who lost theirs. A new member package is being created that will include a badge, roster, welcome letter and the history of MRAC.

The MRAC web page host will be QSL.NET.

Dave, our president soon to be re-elected, sent a thank you letter to Ray @ AES for all the help at Super Fest.

The repeater has our original controller reinstalled. We are also running 150 watts instead of 30. For now the site is still at W9PWG's QTH. The search for a better site will continue. Price is the major issue concerning the new site.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 followed by a tour of Jim's son's airplane that is being restored in his garage.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim WB9LNU

Jim WB9LNU
Secretary

Jim - WB9LNU,

MRAC Club Meeting 5/25/00

From: Wb9lnu@aol.com
Hi Pancho,

The only minutes for the club meeting are, Treasurers report - $7,799.61 plus money in the VEC fund.

Dave did the auction - very well as usual !

The newly elected directors are - Ken W9MOT, Tom KF9PU, and Kate KA9MWT.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim WB9LNU

Jim WB9LNU
Secretary

Side note:

All of our officers from the previous term were re-elected (by **acclamation**) with the exception of Ken Eggert, who stepped down as treasurer and was elected a director. Les Hunt - KB9QZQ has graciously offered to become our treasurer for the new term. Also re-elected were Tom Fuszard and Kate Kedney. John Merkl was appointed to fill the vacancy left when Al Drobac was forced to withdraw due to health and family commitments.

HamateurChatter via E-MAIL

Over the past few months the MRAC has been experimenting with the electronic distribution of the Hamchatter. The feedback has been very positive, therefore we will continue the distribution via electronic means. Commencing with the July 2000 issue, those receiving the electronic version will no longer receive the printed version. The following members are on the electronic distribution list:

WB9AON	W9JK	WB9PSE	W9VBQ
WB9BWP	WD9JKZ	N9PSM	AA9VC
W9CYI	W9LCD	WB9PTC	K4VKW
WD9DNM	K9LCQ	KF9PU	KB9VJS
KG9EE	KE9LL	KB9Q	N9VTN
KG9FC	WB9LNU	KB9QZS	NE9W
AE9G	KB9MMI	KA1RB	KC9WW
KG9GL	KA9MWT	KB9RLB	KF9XL
WB9GYT	WA9NAY	KB9RVP	K9XU
KB9IIH	KB9NGW	WA9SFH	W9YCV
KB9ISE	KS4NX	WB9SMM	W9ZO
KE9JJ	KB9OZN	KB9TIV	W9ZOL

If you are on this list and did not receive the June issue of the electronic version of Hamchatter, please notify the club as soon as possible via e-mail. We will verify your e-mail address.

If you wish to be removed from the list please notify the club as soon as possible via e-mail. We will remove your e-mail address from the list.

If you wish to be added to the list please notify the club as soon as possible via e-mail. We will add your e-mail address to the list.

Again, June will be last month that you will receive both the electronic and paper versions of the Hamchatter.

73 de

K9LCQ

A man who rows the boat
Generally doesn't have time
to rock it.

Wanted

NIXIE TUBES

Wanted: New or Used Nixie tubes as well as equipment with NIXIE tube displays. Equipment may be dead or alive. What have you?
Call Matt - 475-6404.

KA9MTY Estate

From theEstate of KA9MTY - Dick Schlatterer

Tri-Band Beam - Mosley Classic $100.00

40 Foot Rohn 25 Tower $150.00

CDE Rotor Ham-II / CD 44 $100.00

Contact Jerry Thompson - WA9SFH
414-354-6943
or e-mail: jerthomp@execpc.com

VE Results

MRAC-VEC held its last VE session before summer break on May 27, 2000 at AES. There were 28 candidates, and 27 were successful in upgrading or in getting their first license. Ten elements were given, and seven were passed. Those VE's in attendence included:

Barbara Brewer	KB9TIV
Ken Caruso	KS4NX
Tom Czaja	KG9EE
Bob Immekus	W9CYI
John Kraak	KF9XL
Dick McNew	WB9PTC
Norm McNew	KB9QL
Jerry Thompson	WA9SFH

Our next scheduled VE exam session will be September 30, 2000.

73,

John (KF9XL)

John KF9XL

John - KF9XL
One of our two VEC's

Special President's Message:

This concerns the electronic distribution of the Chatter. The May newsletter went out in electronic form extremely large in size. This upset a few people. Those with E-mail already received an official letter of apology from the board about it. I wish to add a couple of personal comments (repeat, personal). Due to its size we probably should not have sent it, BUT, we were in an experimental period for electronic distribution of the Chatter. Last month showed what the worst case could be. I, being President of the club (still) take full responsibility for the inconvenience.

The person in charge must take the heat. Brian White just distributes the E-mail (and keeps the membership database, prints mailing labels, produces the roster and is 2nd Vice-President, just designed and procured the new banner (which was half paid for by Brian and other board members) and staffed the club table at ALL the local hamfests since last fall). Pancho just designs and composes the newsletter and is a Director and works 2 jobs. John Merkl, Barbara Brewer (both directors) and last month Norm Russell get involved in taking the newsletter to be printed, picking it up, folding, labeling, stamping and mailing. Don't complain to them. They are doing their job and doing it quite well (would you like to help them out?).

If you have a complaint, complain to me. If you don't like the way the officers and board are running the club, well, I don't recall any groundswell of volunteers for the election we just had. If you remember back last fall when we discussed budgets, we showed that the Chatter costs more in a year than we receive in total dues. Electronic distribution is a way to decrease some of that cost. We may even decrease the number of issues we publish. The alternative would be to raise dues just to pay for the newsletter. Due to the manner of production of the newsletter, Postscript files must be electronically transferred to me where I convert them to PDF files. If you think your 5M E-mail was big, how about the 27+M of Postscript files I received. This along with the 50-100 E-mails I get every day at home (that does not count the 100 or so emails I receive at work on work related matters). The board will be making some decisions about the Chatter at the June board meeting. Stay tuned for the results.

Speaking of the Chatter, maybe the idea of color and increased graphics is not a good one for electronic distribution. If you believe the news media, you will be downloading all your movies and music through your computer, but that is a long way away for what I think is the majority of people. Current net bandwidth has to increase 50X or so and be reasonably priced, not $50+/month.

David B. McNeely

Serious Stuff

How to Get Along at the Office

- If it rings, put it on hold;
- If it clanks, call the repairman;
- If it whistles, ignore it;
- If it's a friend, take a break;
- If it's a boss, look busy;
- If it talks, take notes;
- If it's handwritten type it;
- If it's typed, copy it;
- If it's copied, file it;
- If it's Friday, Forget it!

Credits

Thanks to our news contributors this month:

KB9BWP WB9LNU WA9SFH
K9LCQ W9NZF KF9XL

We would also like to thank Alfred Huwald, and Myron Hendrickson for taking care of the refreshments at our meetings.

Thanks to Rita Doneis for her help in the proofreading dept.

Our thanks goes to John Merkl and Barbara Brewer for making sure that the 'Chatter gets printed, stamped, and mailed.

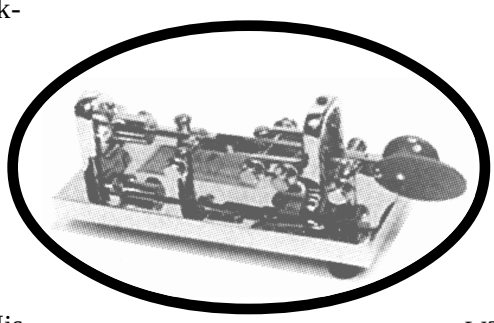
Also our thanks goes to Tom Scherlowsky and Jacquie Horwitz for handling the Raffle at the meetings.

And a Big Thanks to all of our officers (past and present) who have tirelessly toiled for the good of the Club and Amateur Radio in general.

Many thanks!!

Historical Study of Vibroplex

The history of the semi-automatic telegraph key goes quite far back and has included several well-known designers and manufacturers. As the past is hashed and rehashed, several designers and manufacturers surface. Probably the best known to telegraphers is the Vibroplex. Horace Martin was the moving force at the beginning of the commercially manufactured semi-automatic, and his product name has come through to this day, as probably the largest and best known source of such keys (Vibroplex). Of the many manufacturers making semiautomatic keys, his "red bug" nameplate was the most familiar. His product name was created in 1904, and survives to this day. His key created a picture of the classic and its history goes far back into land-line telegraphy.



VIBROPLEX

Vibroplex has made a wider variety of semi-automatics, and has produced a larger volume of keys, than any other manufacturer. This company celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1990. (Actually, 1990 was the founding of the J.E. Albright & Co., which acquired Martin's company in the early days of Martin's production-the Vibroplex name was patented in 1904).

Many manufacturers have come and gone in the production of the vibrating contact instrument: Ted Mc Elroy, E.F. Johnson Co., and Les Logan's Speedex to name a few.

Another imitator surfaced brief-ly (ATOZ-a toy maker), but didn't last long, as Albriqht successfully sued and removed him from contention - incidentally making the ATOZ a desirable collectors' item! (I discovered one at a church rummage sale).

Of the Vibroplex line, my favorite key is a small version of the bug, named "Blue Racer", introduced in 1914, and featured a smaller base as a means of clearing a little room on the telegrapher's crowded workplace! I have several versions of the Racer, and was delighted to see the "new" Racer, recently added to the line-(Hard to find and a bit "pricey"). The Racer was originally designated as "No. 4", following the "Original", the "two lever'', and Model X. This key could be purchased in 2 finishes-standard black gloss, or a nickel plated base. Later, in the 1940's, the de Luxe version was available with a chrome plated base & jeweled bearings.

The no. 4 was an "Original" model with a smaller base, and the damper was changed to a "U-shaped" bracket, forming the wheel support. In the '1950's, the Racer changed from a black base to gray, and the U-shaped damper was changed to the "L-type"from the "Original'' model.

It is of interest to note that base dimensions vary somewhat from the classic 2.5" x 6.375", but the thickness has remained at a nominal 0.5", varying only slightly with the type of finish-nickel plate, black gloss, blue, black, or gray wrinkle paint. The plate edges vary from sharp to rounded corners, with the latest production using square corners and very little radius on the edges.

A partial listing of semi-automatic keys follows:

KEYS II:
The Emporium
Dave Ingram K4TWJ
Vibroplex Tom French W1IMQ
Mc Elroy Tom French

73,

W9NZF

Amateur Radio

Amateur Radio is the means of communication with others on equal terms, of finding friendship, adventure and prestige while seated at one's own fireside. In picking his human contacts out of the air the amateur is not seen by them. He is not known by the clothes he wears but by the signals he emits. He enters a new world whose qualifications for success are within his reach. There are no century-old class prejudices to impede his progress. He enters a thoroughly democratic world where rises or falls by his own efforts. When he is W9XYZ, a beginner, the radio elders help him willingly, and when he becomes W9XYZ, the record-breaker and efficient traffic-handler, he willingly helps the younger genertation. Without a pedigree, a chauffeur, or an old master decorating his living room he can become a prince —— of the air. At the close of the day, filled with the monotonour routine of the machine age, he can find adventure, vicarious travel, prestige and friendship by throwing in the switch and pounding his signals into the air.

Dr. Raymond V. Bowers,
Yale University

BIRTHDAYS in July

		Birthdate
Kenneth J. Jacobchick	W9CCZ	7/5
Robert Tisdale	AA9VO	7/6
Fred Recklies	KB9JBG	7/14
Carlos R. Barron	KG9FC	7/16
Mike McKenna	KB9MMI	7/20
Bessie G. Beider	N9QIT	7/25

73,

Brian - K9LCQ

¡¡Happy Birthday !!

events (upcoming)

* indicates VE testing

ARRL Field Day
JUNE 24 & 25, 2000
Pioneer Village
10 mi North of Cedarburg, WI on Hwy I

SMARC SWAPFEST '00
Sat. - July 8, 2000
American Legion Post 434
Oak Creek, WI
T/I on 146.52 simp

RadioFest XIX
(Antique Radios)
FRI.-SUN. AUG. 4-6, 2000
Ramada Hotel
Elgin, IL

4th Annual!!
Circus City SwapFest *
SAT. - AUG. 12, 2000
Sauk Co. Fairgrounds
Baraboo, WI
T/I on147.315 Repeater (+) PL 123.0

SummerFest 2,000 *
SUN - AUG. 13, 2000
Amana Colonies Convention Center
Amana, Iowa

PEORIA SUPERFEST 2000 *
FRI.-SUN.- SEP. 15-17, 2000
Exposition Gardens Fairgrounds
Peoria, IL
T/I on 147.075 (+)

GCARA
Communiocations Expo
SUN. - SEP. 17, 2000
Kolping Center
Cincinnati, OH
T/I on 146..88 (-)

I need your input for upcoming events.

MRAC

This Month's meeting:

Thu. - June 29, 2000 (Y2K)

7:30 PM

Program: Basics of Decibels -- Matt Planning

Location: Redemption Lutheran Church
Fellowship Hall
4057 N. Mayfair Rd.
(Use the south entrance)
HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE

Please! Don't call the Church for information!!!

Board meeting: Mon. -June 26, 2000

Next meeting: July 28, 2000

HamateurChatter
Deadline is
July 1, 2000

Table of Contents

Area Nets 1
Amateur Radio 6
Birthdays 7
Board Meeting 5/22/Y2K 3
Club Meeting 5/25/Y2K 3
Club Officers 1
Credits 5
Events(upcoming) 7
From the President's Desk 1
HamateurChatter via E-MAIL 4
Historical Study of Vibroplex 6
KA9MTY Estate 4
Latest VE Testing 7
Serious Stuff 5
Special President's Message: 5
VE Results 4Wanted 2, 4

Our Phone number
(262) 797-MRAC
(797-6722)

FROM SPARK TO SPACE

May ,2000 V ol. 08 No. 05

HAMATEURCHATTER

One of the World's Oldest Continuously Active Radio Amateur Clubs - since 1917

Phone (262) 797-MRAC -- Use our Club Repeater - W9RH 147.045+ offset

M.R.A.C.

Milwaukee Radio Amateurs' Club

P.O. Box 25707

Milwaukee, WI 53225